

STREETSCAPE GUIDELINES POLICY

Goal

To preserve and/or establish tree canopies along residential streets, subdivision entrances, and common areas. Plant new trees appropriate to the climate and soils of James City County, enhancing existing healthy, durable, and mature trees in these areas.

Tree preservation/planting shall be accomplished such that, within 20 years growing time, the minimum tree canopy over residential streets shall be *established*.20%. The environmental and aesthetic benefits from tree planting enhance the quality, character, and health of the community.

Guidelines for Street Trees

In all residential subdivisions, deciduous shade trees and/or shrubs shall be planted along all rights-of-way within and abutting the subdivision. Street tree plans shall be prepared by a Virginia Landscape Architect and shall be reviewed and approved by the Development Manager or Designee. The street tree plans shall adhere to the following guidelines:

- Trees and/or shrubs shall be located within a minimum five-foot landscape preservation easement contiguous to such right-of-way *or within the right of way, with VDOT approval*. Every effort should be made to avoid conflict between the landscape preservation easement and the utilities during the design phase of the subdivision. If a conflict cannot be avoided, the landscape preservation easement shall be placed as close to the right-of-way as the design allows. *All landscape easements shall be located no greater than 30% of the distance from the edge of curb to the proposed building envelop*
- - The easement shall contain, at a minimum, one tree per an average 40 linear feet of street on each side of the street or one shrub per an average 20 linear feet of street on each side of the street. The mix of trees and shrubs shall be approved by the Planning Director or his designee.
 - Trees and/or shrubs shall be spaced no greater than 75 feet apart along 60% of the street frontage.
 - All trees that are planted shall be native species or street trees commonly planted in the James City County area that are adapted to the soils and climate. At the time of planting, trees shall have a minimum caliper of 1 ½". Shrubs are to be a minimum of 22" in height at the time of planting. Please refer to the Table 1 for street tree suggestions. Although plant material is not restricted to the list provided, any trees or shrubs that are invasive or require extensive maintenance for disease or pest control will not be approved.

- Existing trees which are ~~within 20 feet of the edge of the right-of-way~~ *within the proposed landscape preservation easement*, and which are protected and preserved in accordance with the requirements of the Zoning Ordinance, may be used to satisfy this planting requirement if approved by the Planning Director. Canopies that are a mixture of existing and planted trees or shrubs shall have similar or complementary branch characteristics.
- Plantings are to occur between November 1 and March 31 while the plant material is dormant to reduce the stress of transplanting. Prior to final site plan approval, the plantings and installation are to be bonded.

Upon completion of installation, *the Planning Director or his designee shall inspect the plantings to verify on behalf of the applicant that the job was completed, or a Virginia Landscape Architect Designer shall can verify, in writing on behalf of the applicant*, that the specified trees or shrubs were installed in the locations shown on the plans. A signed letter from the Landscape ~~Architect~~ *Designer* shall be submitted to the Planning ~~Division~~ *Director or his designee* at the time of verification.

Guidelines for Entrances and Common Areas

Entrances shall be landscaped with native and/or climate and soil appropriate trees, shrubs, grasses, and ground covers except where the existing mature trees have been preserved or protected in such areas. Plant material to be used in these areas shall be specified from Table 2 or, if not on the list, meet the above criteria. Unless the Director of Planning or his designee determines that such landscape treatment is unnecessary, impractical, or in conflict with drainage, utilities, sight distance, or other required features of the subdivision, the cleared portions of the entrances and associated common areas in a residential subdivision shall be landscaped with a minimum of 1 tree and 3 shrubs per 400 square feet exclusive of roadways, sidewalks, recreation facilities or other impervious areas.

In wooded areas, entrance features including walls, fences and signs shall be minimized to reduce the amount of clearing to accommodate entrance roads. In no case shall clearing for entrance roads and abutting utility easements exceed 60 feet in width.

Table 1. Suggested Street Trees

Acer campestre, Hedge Maple*
Acer rubrum, Red Maple
Fraxinus pennsylvanica, Green Ash (seedless cultivars)
Ginkgo biloba, Maidenhair Tree (male cultivars)*
Nyssa sylvatica, Black Tupelo*
Ostrya virginiana, American Hophornbeam*
Plantanus X acerifolia London Planetree
Quercus palustris Pin Oak
Quercus phellos, Willow Oak
Quercus shumardii, Shumard Oak
Ulmus parvifolia, Lacebark Elm*

Zelkova serrata, Japanese Zelkova*

**Trees recommended for thin planting strips or adjacent to sidewalks.*

This list is suggested. Trees used are not required to be from this list.

Table 2. Suggested Plant Material for Entrances and Common Areas

Trees

Betula nigra, River Birch
Carya ovata, Shagbark Hickory
Cercis Canadensis, Eastern Redbud
Cornus kousa, Kousa Dogwood
Juniverus virginiana, Eastern Redcedar
Pinus taeda, Loblolly Pine

Shrubs

Hamamelis virginiana, Witch Hazel
Ilex opaca, Inkberry
Ilex vomitoria, Yaupon Holly
Myrica cerifera, Wax Myrtle
Viburnum dentatum, Arrowwood Viburnum

Groundcovers and other Herbaceous Plants

Calamagrostis acutiflora, Feather Reed Grass
Ceratostigma plumbaginoides, Plumbago
Coreopsis verticillata, Threadleaf Coreopsis
Deschampsia caespitosa, Tufted Hair Grass
Festuca cinerea, Blue Fescue
Helictotrichon sempervirens, Blue Oat Grass
Hemerocalis, Daylily
Hypericum calycinum, St. Johnswort
Liriope muscari, Blue Lily-turf
Miscanthus sinensis, Japanese Silver Grass
Panicum virgatum, Switch Grass
Potentilla fruticosa, Bush Cinquefoil

This list is suggested. Plants used are not required to be from this list.